

On page 2, insert on lines 20 the heading:

--DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-11, and add new claims 12-21:

12. An aqueous composition for coating stainless steel comprising:

- (a) at least one dispersed polyurethane prepolymer having at least one or more blocked isocyanate groups;
- (b) at least one other cross-linkable polymer dispersion or polymer solution; and
- (c) optionally, one or more wetting agents, dispersants, or flow control agents.

13. The composition of claim 12, wherein the dispersed polyurethane prepolymer (a) comprises low molecular weight polyols and aliphatic diisocyanates.

14. The composition of claim 13 wherein the blocking agent comprises one or more selected from the group consisting of aldoximes, ketoximes, lactams, imidazole compounds, β -dicarbonyl compounds, alcohols, phenols, thioalcohols, thiophenols, secondary amines, amides, imides, and hydroxamates.

15. The composition of claim 13, wherein the aliphatic diisocyanate is one or more selected from the group consisting of:

4,4'-dicyclohexylmethane diisocyanate ($H_{12}MDI$); 1-isocyanatomethyl-3-isocyanato-1,5,5-trimethyl cyclohexane (isophorone diisocyanate, IPDI); cyclohexane 1,4-diisocyanate, hydrogenated xylylene diisocyanate (H_6XDI); 1-methyl-2,4-diisocyanato-cyclohexane; m - or p -tetramethylxylene diisocyanate (m -TMXDI, p -TMXDI); dimeric fatty acid diisocyanates; tetramethoxybutane 1,4-diisocyanate; butane 1,4-diisocyanate; hexane 1,6-diisocyanate (HDI); 1,6-diisocyanato-2,2,4-trimethylhexane; 1,6-diisocyanato-2,4,4-trimethylhexane; and dodecane 1,12-diisocyanate ($C_{12}DI$).

16. The composition of claim 12, wherein the cross-linkable polymer component (b) comprises one or more components selected from the group consisting of reactive (meth)acrylate copolymers, polyurethane dispersions based on polyesters, polycarbonates or polyethers, epoxide resin dispersions, and water-soluble or water-dispersible melamine/formaldehyde resins.

17. A process for coating a stainless steel surface with thin-layer, dirt-repelling, hydrolysis-resistant, and scratch-resistant coatings, comprising the following steps:

- optionally, cleaning and degreasing the stainless steel surface;
- optionally, rinsing the surface;

- optionally, treating the surface with an adhesion promoter;
- coating the surface with a composition comprising at least one dispersed polyurethane prepolymer having at least one or more blocked isocyanate groups, at least one other cross-linkable polymer dispersion or polymer solution, and, optionally, one or more wetting agents, dispersants, or flow control agents, so that, after curing, a coating is obtained having a weight per unit area of 0.1 g/m² to 10 g/m²;
- optionally, evaporating off any volatile constituents; and
- curing the coating at temperatures between 100°C and 250°C for a period of 0.5 seconds to 40 minutes.

18. The process of claim 17, wherein the coating obtained has a weight per unit area of 0.5 g/m² to 5 g/m².

19. The process of claim 17, wherein the coating composition is applied to the surface by one or more of flow coating/squeezing, spraying/squeezing, wiper or roller application.